Cleveland Men of Song is one of must see choirs, Fellows insight in starting this choir was a good one. Fellows seem to know how to reach back and create that sound that people of all ages can enjoy.

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Staff Reporter

As we enter the month of February we often think of all the Black pioneers that enhance the world in which we live in now. This month I will be taking a look at how the religious community has made an impact in history.

From those early years when gospel music really started during American slavery, when enslaved Africans were introduced to the Christian religion and converted in large numbers. While researching I found many different African cultures were combined with Western Christianity, with one result being the emergence of the spiritual . Jubilee songs and sorrow songs were two types of spirituals that emerged during the 18th and 19th centuries. Some spirituals were also used to pass on hidden messages; for example, when Harriet Tubman was nearby, slaves would sing “Go Down, Moses’ to signify that a 'deliverer' was nearby. At this time, the term "gospel songs" referred to evangelical hymns sung by Protestant (Congregational and Methodist) Christians, especially those with a

missionary
theme.

I have come to respect great music and the various styles each group or person brings. Through the eyes of these highly influential individuals and musical groups we peer out across the landscape of popular music and are left in awe at the impact that they had on the songs that now define our day the lives that were changed because of their efforts.

One such group and individual is Carlton Fellows and Cleveland Men of Song who have been blessing people all the Greater Cleveland area, as well as other cities. Cleveland Men of Song was born out of Carlton Fellows' vision of a male chorus that would come together in a concert performance in celebration for Black History Month in 2008.

Each year this group of men come together to lift up the name of Jesus in their song ministry. This talented choir sings a little bit of everything, from anthems to that fast pace shout type music.

The all male chorus is comprised of over 50 Afro-American men from the Greater Cleveland area. The men are from various churches and various vocational backgrounds – all who have the one common goal to sing praises to the Lord. Anytime you here these men sing, be prepared to hear a variety of musical songs that includes spirituals, anthems, inspirational and gospel. After a great concert in 2008, the men decided to remain together and continue spreading wonderful music and joy through song.

Since that inaugural concert more men have join the chorus and the number of concert requests have grown. Fellows, a gifted vocalist and musician have traveled the world spreading joy and inspiration through his gift of song. Cleveland Men of Song Choir has shared its message of love & inspiration with hundreds of thousands of people in these couple of years. Through their dynamic performances the Men of Song helps to create a better understanding of the African-American culture & the inspirational music called gospel as it relates to theBlackChurch.

On Friday, Feb. 8, at 7:30 p.m., at the Plymouth Church, 2860 Coventry Road, the Cleveland Men of Song will lift their voices again in an incredibly magnificent and awesome musical performance, "Raising the Praise" for Black History Concert.

Since the inaugural performance in February of 2008, this has been a most spectacular presentation of male voices coming together in musical excellence. This year their special guest conductor will be Pastor Daniel Mario Cason, one the greatest composer's and concert pianist.

Pastor Cason is an ordained minister, concert pianist and a former high school music teacher. He received his formal education at the Cleveland Music School Settlement (Rainey Institute), the renowned Cleveland Institute of Music and the University of SouthernCalifornia(ISOMATA) where he studied master classes with Lee Thompson of the Julliard School of Music. Reverend Cason holds two earned music degrees (Bachelor of Arts and Masters) from MTC School of Theology.

Reverend Cason has been featured musician and Clinician at the Gospel Music Workshop of America, the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses and the International Worship Congress for many years. He has also served as the conference pianist and piano instructor for the Hampton University Ministers Conference. In recent years, Reverend Cason served as Associate Professor atLawsonStateCommunity College.

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Click here to watch video of Cleveland Men of Song

Reminding me of the great Thomas Dorsey who stretched the boundaries in his day to create great gospel music, choirs, and quartets. Talented vocalists have been singing these songs far beyond Dorsey's expectations. The method, dynamics and power behind the songs are different, but God's message is delivered each and every time.

Please make plans to be in attendance. It will be a wonderful night of artistic celebration and praise. For ticket information, call (216) 253-5250.